

## THE RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL FACILITY

The Town of Wellesley operates a 72.45 acre Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) that has received national and international attention. Individuals and groups from municipalities around the United States and from such countries as Japan, Israel, Denmark, USSR, England, Bermuda and Argentina have visited and been impressed with the park like facility.

There are three functions that are performed at the RDF - recycling of specific separated materials, composting of yard waste, and the transfer haul of refuse that cannot be recycled or composted. The recycling program had its start in 1971, when a non-profit group called "Action for Ecology" began operating a source separation recycling center. This group launched an extensive public relations campaign. As a result of these efforts, recycling today plays a major role in the handling of refuse in Wellesley. Materials that are recycled include all types of paper, glass, cans, plastic, oil, batteries, metals, wood, furniture, books, clothing and take it or leave it sections for books and other items that can be used again. In addition, leaves and grass clippings are composted. The finished leafmold is sold to Town residents.

The residents look at the RDF as a park because it includes park benches and picnic tables. In an effort to enhance the beauty of this area, it has been planted with a number of ornamental grasses. The foliage and flowers of the grasses occur in a spectrum of colors and sizes which range from 12" ground covers to six foot specimen plants. The grasses have been planted around the facility to illustrate their landscape value and year round interest. Growing at the RDF, these ornamental grasses illustrate their site adaptability and vigorous growing habit. These plants require little maintenance and are virtually pest free. The grass flowers are excellent for use in dried arrangements and the ornamental blades can be useful in cut flower arrangements. In the landscape settings used at the RDF, the grasses illustrate their usefulness as a groundcover, a hedge, a screen and a slope stabilizer. Grasses are also used to make bold, new design statements.

In 1988, the Wellesley Park Division was 100 years old. As part of the centennial celebrations, an "Art in the Park" show was held at the RDF in June, 1988. The show highlighted artists who specialized in using recycled materials. At this event, some Park Division employees built a sculpture out of recycled lumber. The sculpture is standing at the entrance to the recycling center and is 50 feet long, 14 feet high. It symbolizes how recycling in Wellesley emerged from a grass roots effort and has grown steadily over the years, so the sculpture rises from a bed of ornamental grasses and it slowly rises to a towering peak which contains the recycling symbol. The sculpture praises the recycling effort.

The success of the RDF has received coverage in Boston and national newspapers, television and in a variety of magazines. For all of these reasons, the Recycling and Disposal Facility is a source of pride for residents of Wellesley.